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most undesirable measure, a measure which would destroy the freedom of this port. It will do away with the good of the port, and leave the blockade of New York. It will do away with the good of the port, and leave the blockade of New York. It will do away with the good of the port, and leave the blockade of New York.

But still I will do credit to the Chinese who have been managing it for some time by saying that complaints have been made. Perhaps many complaints have been made, but I think that there have been some brought forward. With reference to the complaint referred to in the Chamber of Commerce the other day, had I known it was made by the gentleman who wrote the letter I never have appeared in the Chamber's meeting with reference to the Opium Farmer owing the goldens, my friend would never give trouble. By article 16 he is bound to extend his five times a month under a penalty.

**COLONIAL TREASURER**—No, he may leave.

**P. RYRIE**—But he is bound by a penalty. The Opium Farmer shall neglect or refuse, without sufficient cause, reasonably to pay to the collector the duties provided and required to be done by him, he will be liable to a penalty for each such neglect exceeding five hundred dollars.

**ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL**—He is required to inspect the goldens. He so if he likes.

**ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL**—That merely refers to the signing of certificates.

**P. RYRIE**—Then it ought to be made clear. However, I think the matter ought to be pressed on. Any further remarks I make on this subject will be considered as leading or suggestive. The Bill is unanimously condemned outside, and I am voting every one.

**CHIEF JUSTICE**—I should like to know what is the law required for, because I am sure the Council would concur as much as possible if it were really required, but time is very short.

**P. RYRIE**—I will give no reason. To the meeting of the Chamber of Commerce ten notices is required.

**WONG SHING**—I beg to say that for the last two or three months speculation has been going on in the market of the Government of China. Two millions of dollars worth of opium sent away on credit. We must postpone to collect some of this amount. It is no intention to bring it into force at once. In fact I suppose could not be brought into force at once if it would not suit the intentions of the Government.

**ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL**—Nothing to say to induce me to grant further delay, therefore move the second reading be taken to Tuesday next.

**CHIEF JUSTICE**—I beg to say that.

**P. RYRIE**—On that day a special meeting of the Chamber of Commerce is being held.

**ACTING ATTORNEY GENERAL**—Could you make your meeting earlier?

**P. RYRIE**—No, the mail only goes at 10. No information has been received from the British Consul at Hong Kong, or from the Whampoa Informant, that Portugal has undertaken that there shall be a similar meeting at Macao. Would three o'clock on Tuesday suit the intention of the Chamber of Commerce time to have a meeting.

**EXCELLENCY** suggested that the Chamber might be able to get through its business.

**P. RYRIE** said the meeting on Tuesday afternoon was then taken on the question of consideration of the second reading of the Bill, which was carried by a majority of about 100, being as follows:—

FOR. AGAINST.  
Surgeon-General Hon. J. Hall-Verrier  
Colonial Treasurer Hon. A. P. MacDonnell  
Attorney-General Hon. J. Hall-Verrier  
Chief Justice Hon. P. Ryrie

**ABOLITION OF PENAL SERVITUDE.**  
The Bill for the abolition of transportation and penal servitude was read a second time.

**ADJOURNMENT.**  
The Council adjourned until Wednesday afternoon at three o'clock.

**MEMORANDUM ON THE QUESTION OF THE PRAYA EXTENSION.**

The following memorandum by His Excellency the Acting Governor was presented to the Legislative Council yesterday:—

Government House,  
Hongkong, 22nd March, 1887.

In 1848, the Surveyor-General submitted, at the request of Sir George Bowen, plan and estimate for the extension of the Praya to the Naval and Military Buildings, with the view of providing a public thoroughfare connecting the Eastern and Western parts of the City of Hongkong. Seven years had elapsed, and the plan and estimate for the extension of the Praya to the Naval and Military Buildings, with the view of providing a public thoroughfare connecting the Eastern and Western parts of the City of Hongkong. Seven years had elapsed, and the plan and estimate for the extension of the Praya to the Naval and Military Buildings, with the view of providing a public thoroughfare connecting the Eastern and Western parts of the City of Hongkong.

The cost of this extension of the Praya was estimated by Mr. Price, at \$45,000.

Sir George Bowen recommended this plan, and the Legislative Council approved the scheme on condition that a fair proportion of the cost should be borne by the Imperial Government. In consideration of the fact that the Imperial Government would gain, and the Colony should pay two thirds of the cost, and the Imperial Government the one third.

The Local, Naval, and Military Authorities, however, did not approve of the Surveyor-General's plan, and asked for modifications, which at first so extensive and costly that the cost could not be entertained, especially as the Imperial Government would gain, and the Colony should pay two thirds of the cost, and the Imperial Government the one third.

Subsequently, however, another plan was proposed by the Naval and Military Authorities, which would cost the cost of £25,000 to £30,000. This plan was approved by the Surveyor-General, and the Imperial Government was asked to contribute the cost of £10,000 to £15,000.

A further modification was afterwards proposed by the Surveyor-General, which would cost the cost of £10,000 to £15,000. This plan was approved by the Surveyor-General, and the Imperial Government was asked to contribute the cost of £10,000 to £15,000.

According to this last plan the Military Authorities would contribute the cost of £10,000 to £15,000, and the Imperial Government would contribute the cost of £10,000 to £15,000.

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**RETURN OF UNSTAMPED CORRESPONDENCE.**

The following correspondence was presented to the Legislative Council on the 25th March—

**POSTMASTER GENERAL, GO. ACTING COLONIAL SECRETARY.**

General Post Office,  
Hongkong, 23rd December, 1886.

Sir,—I have the honour to enclose a copy of Part A of the Order in Council relating to cases should be approved by His Excellency the Officer Administering the Government. I may say that the measures indicated in that Notice are intended to prevent the accumulation of letters of 1891 Section 10 (f) and might therefore legally be put in force without any notice at all, and as they are of the nature of a new departure, and as they will at first procure some citizens the inconvenience of irregularly grumbling. I feel bound to explain their necessity and advantage, and to make aware that, in the brief period of despatch which will ensue, I shall be supported by the sanction of the Government.

2.—The evil which it is sought to check arises chiefly at Swatow, Amoy, and Foochow. It is the habit at those ports not to post letters, but to send them on board the steamships. The consequence is that the Great Mail arrives here, over and above the mail bags, there is a large box full of what are called loose letters, all of which are thrown upon this Office pall-try every day, either by the Customs or by the ship's crew, or even by the passengers.

3.—Very often, too, letters are brought up by the agents of firms at those ports, two or three stamps; this practice is not open to serious objection. To verify the postage and obliterate the stamp is one of the least grumbling. If the merchants are ready for delivery or transmission.

4.—Suppose, however, that out of the whole of the stamps, two or three hundred letters are stamped. Then the rest of the letters are not marked, and the postage is not paid. These letters are taken up from the various firms to which they are addressed, so many for this bank, so many for that firm, &c., &c.; and the postage and the revenue must be added up, and an entry made in the account of that firm. Then the letters are sent to the General Post Office, where they are delivered. And all this, perhaps, at 10 o'clock on French Mail morning, when the delivery of such letters which are prepaid is delayed by those which are not; in other words the mercantile houses here suffer a delay in the delivery of their letters, when the Customs and Revenue officials of firms at Swatow, Amoy, and Foochow, who, so long as their letters get delivered, do not care who pays the postage; in fact they do not probably pay the postage, should be charged to their respective accounts.

5.—A considerable number of the Coast Ports, perhaps two-thirds, do stamp all their letters. There is no reason why all should not do so, and if they do, the postage and the revenue of the Coast Ports would be increased. This Office has increased so much, and has become so pressing, that it is very undesirable to allow precious time to be wasted in this system of charging letters to accounts, a relic of a state of things which has passed away.

7.—About twenty-five years ago there were no postage stamps here at all. All the merchants sent their letters to the Post Office just as they were, and the Office had to receive the letters, and then to charge them, and the total charged to the merchants' accounts. When Sir Hercules Robinson insisted on introducing Postage Stamps and prepayment, there was quite an outbreak of the kind, and the Office was threatened, and begged not to do anything of the sort, and when enterprises failed, dogged opposition was raised. Some of the merchants announced that they would not pay the postage, and that the Office would have to be abandoned.

8.—The non-stamping of letters on the Coast is a relic of this time. All the inconveniences, and all the expense fall on Hongkong. The result is that the Office has to receive the letters, and then to charge them, and the total charged to the merchants' accounts. When Sir Hercules Robinson insisted on introducing Postage Stamps and prepayment, there was quite an outbreak of the kind, and the Office was threatened, and begged not to do anything of the sort, and when enterprises failed, dogged opposition was raised. Some of the merchants announced that they would not pay the postage, and that the Office would have to be abandoned.

9.—Should His Excellency approve of this proposal, I shall give the widest possible publicity to the notice, by sending a copy to every mercantile house south of Shanghai. I have, Sir, the honour to remain, Sir, your obedient servant,

A. LISTEN.  
Postmaster General.

**ENCLOSURE IN POSTMASTER GENERAL'S LETTER NO. 32 OF 1886.**

**POST OFFICE NOTICE.**

With reference to the Order in Council of September 24th, 1885, by which a Table of Stamp Rates was established, and in pursuance of regulations of which was that the prepayment of local postage between Hongkong and the Ports of China in either direction should be compulsory, His Excellency the Governor has directed that the Government should be pleased to order as follows:

On and after the first of March next, all letters and parcels sent to Hongkong from the several Ports of China, whether by sea or land, and Hongkong Postage stamps will not be delivered or sent on to destination.

Such correspondence will be returned to the senders, being opened for that purpose by the Assistant Secretary, and the Postmaster General by section 16 of Ordinance No. 6 of 1884.

This notice applies especially to correspondence sent on board steamships for transmission otherwise than in the Mails.

A. LISTEN.  
Postmaster General.

General Post Office, Hongkong, 20th January, 1887.

The Hon. Frederick Stewart, Acting Colonial Secretary, &c., &c., &c.

**THE PROPOSED LOAN.**

The following letter in connection with the proposed loan was laid on the table of the Legislative Council on the 25th March.

**CROWN AGENTS FOR THE COLONIES TO THE COLONIAL SECRETARY.**

Downing Street,  
London, 1st February, 1887.

Sir,—Referring to your letter of the 23rd September last, No. 1549, I have the honour to state, for the information of the Governor of Hongkong, that the Colonies Office has been instructed to submit to the Board of Finance under the provisions of Ordinance No. 11 of 1886, as we have been able to obtain temporarily funds as required on more advantageous terms.—Our advances now amount to £138,000, which are afloat.

14th January, 1886.....£10,000  
20th January, ".....15,000  
30th March, ".....10,000  
14th April, ".....6,000  
30th June, ".....2,000  
30th July, ".....3,000  
30th August, ".....5,000  
1st September, ".....25,000  
13th November, ".....8,000  
21st October, ".....5,000  
10th February, ".....5,000

£138,000

For these advances the Colony has paid a Bank rate of interest per day, while the Bank rate of 4½ p.c. has varied from a minimum of 2¼ to a maximum of 5 p.c. out, the average rate which it has cost the Colony is 3½ p.c.

Should our expenditure during the current year exceed £200,000, the Government advance of the proposed loan of £200,000, thus providing for the repayment of the temporary advances of £138,000, will not be quite sufficient to provide us with funds to the end of the year 1887, and we shall need to borrow the balance of the Estimate for 1887, which accompanied your letter, par. 5, it is stated that the \$55,000 sum is interest is made up in the following manner:—namely, interest on \$200,000 at 4 p.c. amounts to \$8,000; on \$55,000 at 7 p.c. amounts to \$3,850; on \$29,000, interest on \$60,000, at 6 p.c. amounts to \$3,540. Total interest, \$15,390.

On referring to my accounts you will find that the Colony has never been charged anything like 1 per cent; in fact when that report was written 3 per cent was the highest rate, except during eleven days in Jan. 1886, when it was 4 p.c.

The Colony, moreover, has never paid more than 5 per cent, and that only from the 16th December last to the 3rd instant, when the rate was 6 p.c. Since that date no report has been laid before the Council. It would appear, but just to say that some explanation should be given, as you also suggest that it should go forth uncensored, and that the Colony has, having been charged 1 per cent, for 10 loans—1½ p.c. has been paid. Sir, your obedient servant,

W. C. SARGENT, JUNR.  
Hon. The Colonial Secretary, &c., &c., &c.  
Colo. Hongkong.

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